

# Genealogy in Canada's Western Provinces

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## History

Year	Event
1670	Hudson's Bay Company given exclusive trading rights to the area that became Rupert's Land
1821	Hudson's Bay Company merged with the Northwest Company
1848	Vancouver Island Colony established
1858	The Hudson's Bay Company loses their charter over British Columbia when it is established as a colony
1867	Canada confederated with Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick
1870	Hudson's Bay Company sells Rupert's Land to Canada. Small portion becomes Manitoba, the rest combined with the newly acquired North West Territories
1871	British Columbia joins Canada as the fifth province
1872	Canada Homestead Act began the land grant system to settle the West
1876	District of Keewatin created (which occupies much of the land comprising modern Manitoba)
1880	Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad begins in British Columbia
1881	Manitoba expanded North and West, disputes arise over the land between Manitoba and Ontario
1885	Canadian Pacific Railroad completed
1889	Ontario wins land dispute against Manitoba, expanding westward
1905	Alberta and Saskatchewan added as provinces, Keewatin recombined with the Northwest Territories
1912	Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec expanded Northward to their modern borders
1947	Canadian Citizenship Act – British subjects now needed to naturalize in Canada

## Western Provinces

### Hudson's Bay Company Records

- [Hudson's Bay Company Archives](#) – Archives of Manitoba
  - Most available in person, but 1052 reels of microfilm were digitized encompassing over 10,000 volumes of the pre-1870 records kept at almost five hundred Hudson's Bay Company posts.

1. Go to the "[Keystone](#)" database to search all archival holdings
  2. Search for "Hudson's Bay" as a keyword
  3. Click on "3099 Descriptions of Archival Records" to view a list of related records with the type of record and date coverage. When you find a record you want to consult, click on the hyperlinked title
  4. You can now view a more detailed paragraph about the contents including "how to proceed" which details where and how you can access the records
- [Voyageur Contracts Database](#) - Centre du Patrimoine, The Historical Society of Saint-Boniface

## Canada Censuses

- [Canada Censuses](#) – Library and Archives Canada
  - Census of the [Northwest Provinces, 1906](#)
  - Census of the [Prairie Provinces, 1916](#)
  - Census of the [Prairie Provinces, 1926](#)

## Migration and Naturalization

- [Naturalization lists, 1915 to 1951](#) – LAC
  - Index of the published naturalization lists, use the number and letter code to order the full record from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for \$5.
- [United States Border Crossings from Canada to United States, 1895-1956](#) – FamilySearch, index
- [Border Crossings from U.S. to Canada, 1908-1935](#) – Ancestry, index and images
- [Immigrants to Canada, Porters and Domestics, 1899-1949](#) – LAC
- LAC also has several databases for special groups including Russian, Ukrainian, and Chinese immigrants. Check their [Immigration Records](#) page for more information.

## Land Grants and Related Records

- [Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930](#) – LAC
- [Saskatchewan Homestead Index](#) – Saskatchewan Genealogical Society
- [Alberta Homestead Index](#) – Alberta Genealogical Society
- [Archives CPR Land Sales Catalogue](#) – Glenbow Library and Archives
- [Métis Scrip Records](#) - Library and Archives Canada

## Manitoba

Birth	Marriage	Death
1882-1910 <a href="#">Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency</a>	1882-1940 <a href="#">Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency</a>	1882-1940 <a href="#">Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency</a>
Originals include far more detail such as number of live and still births the mother has had recorded on birth certificates. Using the index, you can order originals for \$12 CAD each.		

## FamilySearch.org

- [Manitoba Church Records, 1800-1959](#) - index and images
  - [Canadiana Heritage](#) also has a collection of parish registers taken from LAC which while not indexed are free to browse and include several record sets not at FamilySearch.org
- [Canada, Manitoba Probate Records, 1871-1930](#) – index and images
  - Organized by Judicial district so you may need to research the locality
- [Canada, Manitoba Census Indexes, 1831-1870](#) – index and images
  - Includes Hudson's Bay Company censuses 1831-1856

## Manitoba Repositories

- Archives of Manitoba
  - [Manitoba Estate File Index](#) – index only
    - Index provides name of the deceased, year and court of the proceedings, file, book, and folio numbers.
    - Follow the instructions on [Find a Will / Estate File in Manitoba Court records](#) to find how to access images of the originals
  - [Extracts from registers of baptisms, marriages and burials in Rupert's Land ... \(1820-1851\)](#) – index only
  - [Partial index of Manitoba soldiers killed in the First World War](#) – index only
- [University of Manitoba Newspaper Search](#) – search engine and images browsing
  - Includes various newspaper runs most spanning the late 1800s to early 1900s, with some issues up to the current century.
- [Manitoba Name Index](#) by the Manitoba Genealogical Society
  - *Only available to members of the society*
  - Combined index to the society's card indexes, cemetery transcriptions, books, newspapers, church, and funeral home records.
- Ancestor Hunt – [Manitoba Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- Library and Archives Canada – [Manitoba Genealogy Resources](#)

## Saskatchewan

Birth	Marriage**	Death
1888* - 1921 <a href="#">EHealth Saskatchewan</a>	1878* - 1946 <a href="#">EHealth Saskatchewan</a>	1888* – 1951 <a href="#">EHealth Saskatchewan</a>
*General compliance was not reached until 1920 **Marriages are not digitized or indexed yet		

## FamilySearch.org

- [Canada, Saskatchewan Probate Estate Files, 1887-1931](#) – images and index
  - Organized by Judicial District so you may need to do some jurisdiction research
  - To browse: select a district > year > file number (name of the descendent is written on the folio cover if you do not know the specific number)
- [Canada, Saskatchewan Judicial District Court Records, 1891-1954](#) – images only

- This collection is only Supreme Court cases from Regina and thus you should have hints your ancestor was involved in the supreme court before browsing the collection
- [Saskatchewan, Judicial District of Saskatoon, District Court naturalization files, 1907-1911](#)
- [Canada, Saskatchewan Catholic Church Records, 1846-1957](#)
- [Canada, Saskatchewan Cemetery Transcripts, ca. 1850-1994](#)
- [Saskatchewan homestead records, 1870-1930, and index](#) – microfilm at the [Family History Library](#)

## Manitoba Repositories

- Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan [Historic Newspapers Online](#) (browse only)
- Ancestor Hunt – [Saskatchewan Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- Library and Archives Canada – [Saskatchewan Genealogy Resources](#)

## Alberta

Birth	Marriage	Death	Stillbirths
1898* - 1901 <a href="#">PAA Birth Indexes</a>	1898* - 1946 <a href="#">PAA Marriage Indexes</a>	1898* - 1971 <a href="#">PAA Death Indexes</a>	1914* - 1946 <a href="#">PAA Stillbirth Indexes</a>
*General compliance was not reached until 1930			

- [Canada, Alberta Catholic Church Parish Registers, 1865-1916](#) – FamilySearch, images only
- Provincial Archives of Alberta Vital Records
  - Select the pertinent index set from [this webpage](#)
  - Select a letter set for your ancestor's surname
  - Select the PDF for the exact letter (checking the year range)
  - Browse the PDF of scanned index pages to find your ancestor's entry
  - Use details from the entry to order the original certificate. Instructions on this can be found in [this PDF](#).
- Provincial Archives of Alberta [church record collection](#) – in person only
- [Peel's Prairie Provinces](#) online digitized newspapers – University of Alberta
  - This database includes papers from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba
- Ancestor Hunt – [Alberta Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- Library and Archives Canada – [Alberta Genealogy Resources](#)

## British Columbia

	Birth	Marriage	Death
Record Keeping	1872* - 1901	1872* - 1946	1872* - 2001
RBCM	1854 – 1903 <a href="#">Royal BC Museum</a>	1871 – 1944 <a href="#">Royal BC Museum</a>	1872 – 1999 <a href="#">Royal BC Museum</a>
	*General compliance was not reached until 1920		

## FamilySearch.org

- Vital Records – FamilySearch.org does not have all vital records available, also consult the Royal BC Museum database.
  - [Canada, British Columbia Birth Registrations, 1854-1903](#) – index and images
  - [Canada, British Columbia Marriage Registrations, 1859-1932; 1937-1938](#) – index and images
    - Includes the colonial marriage collection
  - [Canada, British Columbia Death Registrations, 1872-1986; 1992-1993](#) – index
- [Canada, British Columbia Wills, 1861-1981](#) – images only
- [Canada, British Columbia Estate Files, 1859-1949](#) – images only
- [Canada, British Columbia Crown Land Grant Records, 1851-1874](#) – images only
- [Canada, British Columbia Dominion Land Branch Records, 1885-1949](#) – images only
- [Canada, British Columbia Naturalization Records, 1859-1926](#) – index and images
- [Canada, British Columbia, Victoria Times Birth, Marriage and Death Notices, 1901-1939](#) index and images

## British Columbia Repositories

- [Royal British Columbia Museum](#) (containing the provincial archives)
  - Indexes of their birth, marriage, death, baptism, and colonial marriages are included in a full catalog search.
  - Once you find a match, take note of the BC Archives microfilm number. You will then need to consult the microfilm on an in-person visit.
    - If there is also a GS microfilm number, that means FamilySearch.org has the same microfilm. Enter this microfilm number into the FamilySearch catalog to view the digitized images.
- [British Columbia City Directories](#) – Vancouver Public Library
- [British Columbia School Records](#) through the FamilySearch Wiki
- Ancestor Hunt – [British Columbia Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- Library and Archives Canada – [British Columbia Genealogy Resources](#)